

# MOTORHOME ON THE *Madigan*

Offroad independence with all the comforts of home sans the need to tow can seem unfeasible – but not if the base vehicle is a 4x4 truck.

WORDS AND PICS GARY TISCHER



“Owners of these vehicles travel to far-flung parts of the world where self-sufficiency and reliance are incredibly important



**THE BASE UNDER THE BUILD**

Under every good build is a good base, and that is certainly true in this case. The preferred base vehicle at AAV4x4 is the reliable Fuso Canter FGB71 in either single or crew cab. Out of the box this is a pretty good vehicle offroad, but there are always different enhancements that can be added to make it even better. The single cab can be had for around \$74k plus on road costs — not bad when you consider the cost of a standard 4x4 RV.

There are a heap of options to make it go further, including diff

lockers and bar work, which will start to add to the cost of any vehicle. The Canter has a GVM of 6000kg and requires a light truck licence to drive it.

**HOME AWAY FROM HOME**

One of the first benefits of a 4x4 RV is that there is no hitching a caravan or camper. Your home is right there and can be accessed from the vehicle cab if it's pouring rain or there are hungry lions prowling around outside.

Another benefit is that the length of the RV is a lot shorter than a tow

vehicle/caravan combo, and you won't see a 4x4/caravan combo on the Madigan Line or other serious tracks where the Global Xplorer can easily navigate.

So, what do you get in your home away from home? A full wet bathroom with shower, basin, and toilet — for many, this alone will make for an attractive outback home. Add to that a double bed, pull-out dining table, diesel water heater and AC, and a 190L vertical fridge/freezer. There is also a 1450mm of kitchen workbench, 188L of water, and 190L of diesel.

If you haven't seen the TV series *The Long Way Round*, it's worth finding a copy. It takes you overlanding in some crazy places, including the Road of Bones in eastern Russia. Kym Bolton and his wife Lyn did exactly this, and nine months later they were driving across Siberia on their own overland adventure.

It was on this trip that Kym came up with the concept of a better overland vehicle, which later manifested as the EarthCruiser. Not happy with spending all his time building vehicles for others, he sold his part of the business and kept travelling the world. After 15 years and 350,000km, Kym consolidated a number of family businesses into Australian Adventure Vehicles (AAV4x4).

It's worth knowing the pedigree behind the design of the Global Xplorer and what sets it apart from other large offroad vehicles. The KISS (Keep It Simple) principle is part of the philosophy, as owners of these vehicles travel to remote and far-flung parts of the world where self-sufficiency and reliability are incredibly important. Kym and Lyn's most recent adventure was on the Madigan Line in the Simpson.





You'll be whipping up meals in no time



Windows complement the bright interior



The bench space is generous



Dual spare tyres are at the back



There's plenty of external space



A full wet bathroom is included

“ This layout has been designed after many years and kilometres of overland travel in all weather conditions

**BODY DETAIL**

The main body is constructed with 32mm thick composite comprising a high density foam inner sandwiched between fibreglass sheets. This creates a very strong body that is both light and highly insulated. There are plenty of windows on three sides, plus roof vents — all of which provide a very light and airy internal space.

The bed is east/west, which may not suit everyone, but does provide great views to the outside world — no need to get out of bed to check the weather.

Below the bed are two large pull-out drawers suitable for clothing. Above these is a pull-out table which provides a decent table for both eating and working on a laptop. Under the comfortable dining area seating are storage area with one being easily accessed as you enter the main doorway — excellent for dirty footwear.

On the opposite side of the entry is the full wet bathroom with shower, basin, cabinet, and chemical toilet. The bathroom has its own window, rooftop vent, and fully closing door so all the humid air can be expelled.

This layout has been designed after many years and kilometres of overland travel in all weather conditions. You can be confident that it has been well thought out, with the location and inclusion of each item field tested for both function and liveability.

As you climb the stairs, you will see the upright 190L fridge/freezer which will provide cold food space for weeks of off-grid living. To the left of this is the kitchen comprised of a large sink with a cover and a diesel ceramic cooktop above six large self-closing drawers. Above

the bench top are three cupboards and a large window to let light in while the cooking fumes escape. There is a padded seat at the end of the kitchen; the photo is an internal view while the vehicle is at maximum flex and body twist. In the normal parked situation, both body and vehicle will be lined up. The crawl-through hatch into the vehicle cabin is located next to the small seat. Most times you will use the main door to enter the RV side of the unit, but in bad weather or if those crocs are circling, the hatch provides a way of escaping both.

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**MOTORHOME**

GVM 6000kg  
Cladding Composite panel  
Wheels & Tyres 37x12.5 R17  
Style Motorhome

**DIMENSIONS**

Body size internal 4200mm (L) x 2070mm (W) x 1920mm (H)  
Body size external 4260mm (L) x 2140mm (W) x 3150mm (H)  
Awning size 4m x 2.5m

**ACCESSORIES**

Water 188L fresh, 45L grey  
Diesel 190L  
Hot water service Diesel Eberspacher  
Furnace 2.5L/min  
Cooktop 2 position Diesel Wallas 85NDT  
Kitchen Internal kitchen  
Battery 2 x 120Ah AGM (upgradable to 3 AGM or 3 x 120Ah Lithium)  
Inverter Victron VPCM 1600W inverter and battery charger (upgradeable to 2300W)  
Solar 2 x 160W panels (upgradeable to 450W)

**STARTING PRICE**

\$201,000

**AS TESTED & FULLY OPTIONED**

\$245,000

**ENQUIRIES**

Australian Adventure Vehicles 4x4 (AAV4x4)  
221 Leitchs Road, Brendale, QLD 4500  
P 0430 595 823  
E sales@aav4x4.com.au  
W AAV4x4.com.au



The layout makes the most of the space on offer

## BEND AND TWIST

There are loads of details that I could go into about the Canter, but that would leave no space for the RV side of the equation. One detail I should mention is the amount of wheel travel and body flex that the truck has. It is huge, as can be seen in some of the images. If you were to simply bolt a body on the back it would bend and break on the first trip.

To ensure this doesn't happen, a kinetic subframe is attached to the truck chassis allowing the chassis to twist without affecting a body riding on the back. If you already know about trucks this won't surprise you, but if you come from a standard vehicle it is not something you think about until you see the amount of twist that develops when a truck goes onto a true 4x4 track!



This 4WD RV will get you off the beaten track



This isn't your regular RV



### THE BOTTOM LINE

The Global Xplorer won't be for everybody, but given its price, comfort, and functionality, it makes a very attractive package. Its status as a light truck will be the biggest barrier to most people looking to escape the city. However, this is also one of its biggest benefits as you are able to carry a home away from home and still tow a large boat or quad bikes/side-by-side to your destinations. Any vehicle that can be comfortable on the Madigan Line, Fraser Island, and off-grid in Africa is worth looking at if you are considering getting away from it all and staying away for a while. Given all the border closures lately, this could be the perfect getaway vehicle. 🚐